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FORTY-FIFTH ANNIVERSARY OF THE UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS

Letter dated 10 December 1993 from the Permanent Representative of Tunisia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit to you herewith the text of the statement of the Government of Tunisia published on the occasion of the celebration, on 10 December 1993, of the forty-fifth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would have this letter and its annex circulated as a document of the General Assembly under agenda item 20.

(Signed) Slaheddine ABDELLAH
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

ANNEX

Statement by the Government of Tunisia on the occasion of the celebration of Human Rights Day (10 December 1993)

Tunisia's celebration this year of Human Rights Day, which marks the forty-fifth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, takes on a special meaning after the six years of profound change and fundamental reforms that our country has witnessed in every area since 7 November 1987.

Tunisia proudly celebrates this anniversary and reaffirms its unfailing adherence to the lofty principles contained in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the subsequent covenants and instruments. It considers human rights to be among the major issues that face humanity and has placed it in the forefront of the cultural transformation that the country has been undergoing as this century draws to a close.

In keeping with the fundamental policies it has adopted in this field, Tunisia has placed the question of human rights at the top of its basic choices and reaffirmed on numerous occasions its constant desire to promote their protection, development and consecration in the concrete world, within a comprehensive vision of their political, economic, social and cultural dimensions in a society in which security and stability reign supreme. Since the transformation began, it has proceeded within that context to enact legislation, revitalize the institutions and structures concerned, promote education in human rights and ensure that they become rooted in the day-to-day reality of its citizens.

This domestic policy has had positive repercussions in the international sphere as well, inasmuch as our country was elected in 1993 to preside over the Commission on Human Rights and was nominated for the vice-chairmanship of the World Conference on Human Rights, in Vienna. In addition, Tunisia was chosen to hold the Regional Meeting for Africa of the World Conference on Human Rights and, from 13 to 17 of the current month, will host the International Symposium of National Human Rights Institutions, which it is organizing in cooperation with the United Nations.

Commensurate with the efforts of new-age Tunisia to promote human rights, to put its convictions regarding them into practice and to abide by its international commitments in that area is its desire to participate in furthering the advancement of human rights in the world and support the efforts of the international Organization to stress the right of self-determination, the liberation of peoples, the eradication of colonialism, the elimination of poverty and ignorance and the guaranteeing of political freedoms.

In this area Tunisia has been and continues to be a forerunner in providing support to the Palestinian people and the people of South Africa and has pointed to the need to assist peoples in the throes of war and famine, in particular the peoples of Somalia and Bosnia and Herzegovina.

In affirming once again its adherence to the principles of the Declaration, Tunisia, whose legislation now reflects the human values of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, calls upon the international community to support the efforts of the United Nations and strengthen cooperation with it with a view to consolidating human rights, rendering them operative in day-to-day reality and ensuring their advancement so as to create a coherent, integrated international society governed by justice, brotherhood and cooperation and permit the firm establishment of international peace and security.